

reported by Admiral Dennis Blair, Commander-in-Chief Pacific, in a recent news conference reported that these interceptors have been flying dangerously close to our aircraft and that we had filed a formal protest. Any apology is not the responsibility of the United States. Unfortunately, the immediate comments from the highest level of the Chinese Government informed the Chinese people and the world that the U.S. aircraft invaded Chinese airspace, but it didn't inform them that was the case only after the EP-3E pilot sought the closest landing base for his damaged aircraft on Hainan Island.

[From the Washington Post, Apr. 4, 2001]
REGARDING CHINA, IS IT GETTING PERSONAL?
(By Jim Hoagland)

For reasons physical and political, the probability that an American spy plane deliberately rammed a Chinese jet fighter over the South China Sea on Sunday runs as close to a perfect zero as mathematics allows. Imagine a fully loaded moving van trying to ram a Harley-Davidson motorcycle on an open plain and you get the picture.

So the official Chinese version of the collision that forced a U.S. Navy EP-3 electronic surveillance warplane into a mayday landing on Hainan Island can be dismissed. The Chinese F-8 pilot who went up to harass American spies at work almost certainly overdid his instructions to be particularly aggressive and accidentally flew into the lumbering propeller-driven craft.

But Beijing's false accusation of U.S. responsibility is revealing nonetheless. It tells us much about the air of confrontation that has quickly developed between President George W. Bush's incoming administration and President Jiang Zemin's outgoing leadership team.

The Chinese lie is a reflexive act of pride, and pride is a driving force for Jiang as he draws an ever-clearer line in the sand for Bush. The underlying strategic tensions between the two nations are rapidly getting personal: Jiang sees American actions suddenly threatening his legacy.

Even the best-laid strategies can be blown off course by stray winds. The spy plane incident is the latest in a series of seemingly unrelated, and unplanned, mishaps in American-Chinese relations since Bush's election. Taken together, these incidents illustrate the force of serendipity in politics and policy.

None of their intelligence briefings or position papers would have prepared Bush or Jiang to anticipate that a senior Chinese intelligence officer would defect to the United States in December. News of that defection leaked into Taiwanese newspapers in March. Just as China's deputy prime minister was settling out on a frame-setting trip to Washington and meeting with Bush.

Both the defection and, to Chinese eyes, the suspicious timing of the leak may have put China's heavy-handed security services even more on edge. They terrorized a Chinese-American family visiting relatives in China by arresting the mother, Gao Zhan, on espionage charges Feb. 11, and have arrested at least one other Chinese American scholar since.

Jiang was no more likely to have been consulted on Gao Zhan's arrest than Bush was to have been asked to authorize the specific espionage mission near Hainan that went wrong. But the two leaders must now deal with the consequences of these incidents, and do so at an unsettling moment of dual transition.

Jiang, who is due to retire by 2003, is beginning to gradually yield power, while Bush is trying to grab hold of it with a seriously understaffed administration.

Add to this the reality that China and the United States have never developed the kind of informal crisis-management framework that Washington and Moscow learned to apply to strategic mishap, and the opportunity for the EP-3 incident to become the first crisis of Bush's presidency is evident. It is a time for caution on both sides.

The plane incident comes as Bush moves toward a decision later this month on Taiwan's request to buy new U.S. weapons, including four destroyers equipped with sophisticated Aegis phased radar systems. It was to head off this sale that Jiang dispatched Deputy Prime Minister Qian Qichen to meet with Bush last month.

Bush refused to give Qian any assurances on a subject that Jiang has made into the make-or-break issue in Chinese-American relations. Pride dictates this stand more than strategic calculation, since the radar systems would take nearly a decade to deliver.

Jiang began his term by promising his colleagues on the Politburo to bring China to the point of reabsorbing Taiwan at a time of Beijing's choosing, according to U.S. intelligence reports. The Aegis sale would be a powerful symbol of failure in Jiang's quest for what he said would be his most "historic accomplishment."

Bush must make the decision on the Aegis sale on its own merits and not allow Jiang to gain leverage over the sale through the spy plane incident. There may be other weapons systems that would meet Taiwan's immediate needs as well as the Aegis, but that decision must be made on military and national security criteria, not under the threat of Chinese blackmail.

The Pentagon may have acted unwisely in sending the espionage plane so close to China at this particularly sensitive moment. But there can be no American apology based on the false Chinese version of events, as Beijing demands. That is not just a matter of pride. It is one of justice.

ISLAMIC EXTREMISTS FIND UNWITTING ALLIES IN CENTRAL ASIAN DICTATORSHIPS

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 4, 2001

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I am utterly appalled by the Taliban regime's vicious campaign to stamp out freedom and religious tolerance in Afghanistan. But the Taliban's zeal to propagate a warped version of Islam—and the support for terrorism and drug trafficking that goes along with it—is not limited to Afghanistan. Already, an Islamic movement which was designated as a terrorist group by the United States Department of State has taken root in the Fergana valley area where the borders of Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan meet. This insurgency has the full support and assistance of the despotic Taliban regime in Afghanistan.

So far, Kazakhstan has not been directly affected by this insurgency. However, because of its oil and mineral wealth, Kazakhstan is the crown jewel of the region and is thus almost certainly the ultimate target of the Islamic extremists. Kazakhstan's authoritarian regime has taken note of the alarming developments with its neighbors to the south and has taken steps to strengthen its defenses. That's the good news. The bad news, however, is that President Nursultan Nazarbayev has also stepped up domestic repression.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Kazakhstan know that they inhabit a rich country, but they also know that very little of that wealth trickles down to them. They are also not blind to the questionable elections, the stifling of press freedom, and the jailing of opposition leaders that have characterized the country's political life. They are losing hope, and thus they are vulnerable to the siren calls of the Islamic extremists. The parallel to the situation under Suharto in Indonesia ought to be instructive. Fortunately for Indonesia, Islamic extremists were not the beneficiaries of Suharto's ouster, but the same could not be said for Kazakhstan and some of its neighbors.

In the March 3 issue of *The Economist*, there is an excellent article on Kazakhstan's security situation. The author of the article concludes: "Government repression and mismanagement help to nourish extremism and terrorism in Central Asia. An effort to improve social and economic conditions and freedom of expression might make Kazakhstan less fertile ground for militant zealots."

That, Mr. Speaker, is the crux of the issue. I submit the full text of this article from *The Economist* to be placed in the RECORD following my remarks.

Mr. Speaker, some here in Washington may be tempted to urge U.S. support for President Nazarbayev and the other authoritarian regimes in Central Asia, because they claim to be bulwarks of defense against Islamic extremism. Unfortunately, however, the Central Asian domestic political environment is the problem, not the solution. Only a democratic political system, a free press and respect for human rights will stop Islamic extremists. And the United States must stand with those governments in Central Asia who share these values.

[From *The Economist*, Mar. 3, 2001]

KAZAKHSTAN—IN DEFENSE

When the Soviet Union broke up ten years ago, the leaders of Central Asia's newly independent states felt safe from possible attacks on their region. Their main concern was to promote order, economic reform and the assertion of power for themselves and their families. They were jolted out of their complacency by bomb blasts in Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan, in February 1999 and an attack by Islamic militants in Kirgizstan in August. Last year Islamists again attacked both countries.

Although Kazakhstan was not directly affected by these attacks, they have alerted the country to look to its defences. President Nursultan Nazarbaev has set about making Kazakhstan's armed forces capable of dealing with what he believes are the main threats to the state: terrorism as a result of religious extremism, and organised crime.

He is strengthening defences in the south, in the mountainous border regions from which an Islamic incursion might come. He wants his soldiers to be more mobile. Sniper groups are being formed. Villagers with local knowledge of the terrain are being recruited as guides. The country's defence budget has been more than doubled this year to \$171m, or 1% of GDP. Soldiers' pay is to go up by 30-40%.

One difficulty is that Kazakhstan's borders were not clearly defined in Soviet times, so it is difficult to decide what is a "border incursion". Kazakhstan has 14,000km (8,750 miles) of borders with neighbouring states. It has agreed on its border with China, but it is still negotiating with Russia, Kirgizstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. Bulat